GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
TOURISM AND CULTURE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:603
ANSWERED ON:05.05.2003
DECLINE IN FOREIGN TOURISTS ARRIVAL
NEDURUMALLI JANARDHANA REDDY

Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been a decline in foreign tourists during the last three years;

(b) if so, the factors attributed thereto;

(c) whether the foreign tourists are likely to increase during 2003-2004;

(d) if so, the assessment made about the number of foreign tourists arrival and the foreign exchange likely to be earned therefrom;

(e) whether the Government have formulated any plan to popularise Indian places of tourist interest abroad; and

(f) if so, the details alongwith steps proposed by the Government to attract foreign tourists?

Answer

MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN)

(a), (b), (c), (d), (e) and (f): A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

STATEMENT IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION No 603 ANSWERED ON 5-5-2003 REGARDING DECLINE IN FOREIGN TOURISTS' ARRIVAL.

(a): The tourist arrivals during the year 2000 registered a growth rate of 6.7% as compared to the year 1999. However, the tourist traffic in the year 2001 and 2002 declined by 4.2% and 6.9% respectively as compared to the corresponding previous years. On account of various infrastructural and promotional initiatives the trend has been reversed from October, 2002 onwards. From October, 2002 to February end 2003, there has been a growth of around 15.5% as compared to same period in the previous year.

(b): The tourist traffic in the year 2001 and 2002 declined due to a number of reasons including overall global economic down trend, September 11 incident in the USA, war in Afghanistan, terrorist attack on Indian Parliament, tension on Indo-Pak border and the travel advisories issued by a number of foreign Governments.

(c): With the revival trend observed in the flow of tourist traffic since October 2002, it is envisaged that the number of foreign tourists may increase during the year 2003-2004.

(d): In view of the uncertainty in the international travel and tourism market particularly on account of the Iraq War and the impact of SARS it is not possible to make projections for the present financial year.

(e): Yes, Sir.

(f): Various steps taken by the Government to popularise Indian places of tourist interest and to attract foreign tourists include:-

i) Direct approach to the consumers through Electronic and Print media through new and catchy messages.
ii) Creation of World Class Collaterals.
iii) Centralized Electronic Media Campaign.
iv) Direct co-operative marketing with the Airlines, tour operators and wholesalers overseas.
v) To attach greater focus in the emerging markets particularly in the region of China, North East Asia and South East Asia.
vi) Participation in Trade Fairs & Exhibitions.
vii) Optimize Editorial PR and Publicity.
viii) Use of Internet and web marketing.
ix) Generate Tourist Publications.
x) Re-enforced hospitality programmes including grant of air passages to invite the media personnel, tour operators on familiarization tour to India to get first hand knowledge on various tourism products.

In addition to the above, the Department of Tourism, Govt. of India has the following short-term and long-term plans to promote tourism

thereby attracting foreign tourists:

-? Positioning and maintaining tourism development as a National priority activity;
-? Enhancing and maintaining the competitiveness of India as a tourism destination;
-? Improving India's existing tourism products and expanding these to meet new market requirements;
-? Creation of world class infrastructure;
-? Developing sustained and effective market plans and programmes;
-? Special thrust to rural and small segment tourism;
-? Attention to civilizational issues and issues pertaining to civic administration, good governance and also of social and cultural values; and
-? Development of tourism circuits and tourism-cum-cultural hubs.